

9. Express the Creativity of the Source: Auto Think

July 19th, 2018

You know how when you're doing your creative thing – maybe it's writing or painting, or making music, or doing creative problem solving with others, or something else – sometimes it's just plain hard work trying to squeeze anything out of your brain. You have writers block or you've gone tone deaf or your mind is fuzzy. Whatever term you use for it, you just can't seem to get those creative juices flowing. But other times, creativity gushes out of you like a flash flood, effortlessly. The ideas just keep coming and the words are brilliant and the result is exactly what you were hoping for. What's the difference here? When the creativity is flowing, where is it coming from?

Last time I was here we talked about spontaneity arising from the source. The *source*, you will recall, is that “place” (that is not a place) that is variously called spirit, grace, nature, God-in-you, the big self, the true self, the universe, the cosmos, the still small voice, the one, the nothing, the void, emptiness, fullness, and so on. The way that I find most helpful to describe it is the deep subconscious, from which everything bubbles and percolates up to the surface of consciousness. Source is that bubbling place, the stuff that percolates, but before it passes through the many twists and turns and filters caused by the residue of our past experiences. Last week we talked about how thoughts or actions can rise through the subconscious into the very first moments of conscious awareness, and can escape out into the world without our cognitive minds grasping and manipulating the arising. This is what I am calling spontaneity of the source. When insights arise like this in meditation, we call it the *wisdom function*. Our deep creativity arises from the same place, and when this happens, we call it *creative flow*.

The technique I'm going to introduce tonight is just a special formulation of what we've been doing all year – a bit of noting, and watching our thoughts. But it's adapted specifically for intentionally setting aside the conscious filters of our cognitive minds and sensitizing us to the still, small voice that slips out into our awareness straight from the depths. When I first learned this technique, I was waiting for some deep insights, but instead my mind was suddenly filled with buddhist one-liners. I didn't have to think about them. They just popped into my mind one after the other. When I wrote them all down, I ended up with four pages of jokes that were actually pretty funny, but no profound wisdom. For several days following that, I was able to tap into that creative streak by doing

the same technique for a few minutes. So creativity and wisdom live together down in the bubbling depths of our subconscious. Of course, we can't *make* creativity (or wisdom) flow on demand, but there are specific things we can do to encourage our creativity to flow directly from the source.

So tonight I'm going to teach a technique called "Auto Think." It won't guarantee insights or inspiration, but it is creating an environment which is favorable to the spontaneous arising of thought, because it is creating an environment where we are intentionally letting go of the need to grasp and manipulate what comes into our conscious awareness. We'll be looking at our thoughts, gaining some equanimity and distance from them, and then sitting back and continuing to watch carefully without interfering with what comes up. I do a micro-hit of Auto Think before every teaching session, and when I have to write something creative (like this talk). It's a great way to get the small self out of the way and allow the deep self to speak.

[Do GM: Note Mind Space: See, Hear, Both, or Rest. Then Even coverage of Mind Space without noting or soaking. Just awareness of all activity in Mind Space.]

Discuss and repeat.